1917.

EDUCATION COMMITTEE

OF THE

MERIONETHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL.

THE

ANNUAL REPORT

OF

E. LEWYS-LLOYD,

County Medical Officer.

Edward Williams, Printer, Dolgelley.

OFFICERS.

Mr. Richard Barnett, Education Offices, Towyn, *Secretary.*

Dr. R. T. Edwards, Dolgelley, *School Medical Officer,*

(resigned May 1917).

Dr. E. Lewys-Lloyd, County Health Offices, Dolgelley, *School Medical Officer* (appointed May, 1917).

Miss R. M. Parry, *Superintendent School Nurse,* Dolgelley.

ATTENDANCE OFFICERS.

School District.		
BALA	...	Mr. John Thomas Jones, Bala.
BARMOUTH	...	Mr. John Lewis, Dyffryn.
CORWEN	...	Mr. David Davies, Corwen.
DOLGELLEY	...	Mr. John Roberts, Dolgelley
FESTINIOG URBAN	...	Mr. Richard Hughes, Blaenau Festiniog.
FESTINIOG RURAL	...	Mr. John Williams, Penrhyndeudraeth.
TOWYN	...	Mr. Llewelyn Jones, Pennal, Machynlleth

TO THE LOCAL EDUCATION AUTHORITY, COUNTY OF MERIONETH.

MR. CHAIRMAN, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

I beg to present to you the Annual Report for the year 1917, on the Medical Inspection of School Children, under the Education (Administrative Provisions) Act, 1907.

Dr. R. T. Edwards was released to take up Military duties, and the District Medical Officers of Health were appointed Assistant School Medical Officers for their respective districts.

Dr. Edwards resigned his post in May 1917, when I was appointed, and I took up the duties in July 1917, when the arrangements with the Assistant Medical Officers terminated.

I am glad to be able to report that every School in the County was inspected during the year 1917.

I have to thank my colleagues in the Education Office and the Head Teachers for their cordial co-operation.

I am, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant,

E. LEWYS LLOYD,

School Medical Officer.

COUNTY HEALTH OFFICES,

DOLGELLEY,

June 1918.

MEMBERS OF THE

MERIONETH EDUCATION AUTHORITY.

Alderman JOHN JONES, Dolgelley, *Chairman.*

Councillor R. TALFOR PHILLIPS, Festiniog, *Vice-Chairman.*

Alderman W. P. Evans, Blaenau Festiniog.
,, Robert Evans, Crynierth, Llandderfel.
,, William Hughes, Dolgelley.
,, H. Haydn Jones, M.P., Towyn.
,, E. D. Jones, Llandrillo.
,, William Owen, Blaenau Festiniog.
,, R. E. Roberts, Llanuwchllyn.
,, Sir Osmond Williams, Bart., Penrhyn.
,, T. Martin Williams, Barmouth.
Councillor L. J. Davies, Llanuwchllyn.
,, G. G. Davies, Blaenau Festiniog.
,, William Evans, Llanelltyd.
,, Edward Griffith, Harlech.
,, Joseph Humphreys, Penrhyn.
,, J. Maethlon James, Towyn.
,, David Jones, Aberllefenni.
,, Richard Jones, M.D., Blaenau Festiniog.
,, R. T. Jones, Penrhyn.
,, T. Lloyd Jones, Corwen.
,, Owen Owen, Blaenau Festiniog.
,, D. White Phillips, Blaenau Festiniog.
,, Sir H. B. Robertson, Llandderfel.
,, John Roberts, Barmouth.
,, L. W. Thomas, Blaenau Festiniog.
,, W. O. Williams, Corwen.
,, W. J. Williams, Trawsfynydd.
,, R. T. Vaughan, Llanfor, Bala.
Prof. Phillips, D.Sc., Bangor.
Mr. Thomas Jones, B.Sc., Towyn.
Mr. J. Lloyd Owen, Bala.
Mr. J. H. Davies, M.A., Aberystwyth.
Mr. Edward Rowland, Pennal.
Mrs. Burton, Bala.
Mis. M. C. Jones, Blaenau Festiniog.
Miss Owens, M.A., Bala.

NUMBER OF CHILDREN EXAMINED.

Group 1.—"Entrants."

Age.	5 years	6 years	7 years	Total
Boys ...	189	82	40	311
Girls ...	150	81	32	263
Total ...	339	163	72	574

Group II.—"Intermediate, age 8."

Boys	...	...	62	
Girls	...	...	68	
Total	...	...	130 ...	130

Group III.—"Leavers."

Boys	...	...	298	
Girls	...	...	305	
Total	...	...	603 ...	603

Total examined at "Routine Ages" ... 1307

Group IV.—"Special Cases."

(a) Those brought forward by Parents or Teachers...	556	
(b) Special Cases re-examined	464	
		1020
Total numbers of children examined ...		2327

Number of Children examined in the different School Districts.

School District.	At Routine Ages. Boys.	Girls.	Total.	Special Cases.	Grand Total.
Bala ...	63	63	126	105	231
Barmouth ...	62	71	133	135	268
Corwen ...	69	70	139	100	239
Dolgelley ...	90	77	167	110	277
Festiniog Urban ...	124	127	251	273	524
Festiniog Rural ...	109	98	207	132	339
Towyn ...	154	130	284	165	449
	671	636	1307	1020	2327

CLEANLINESS.

In the Routine Examinations records were made of 1279 children and of these

1128 were found to be clean
77 were found to be fairly clean
74 were found to be dirty.

In addition 45 boys and 95 girls were brought forward for special inspection in this respect and of these 62 were found to be fairly clean and 78 dirty.

The question of want of cleanliness of person and of heads is a serious matter in a County like Merioneth, where there are, practically, no private elementary schools, and where it may be said that 95% of the children attend the public elementary schools, therefore, it follows that the Local Education Authority should insist upon a high standard of cleanliness among the school children.

Every case found verminous was excluded immediately, and these cases were treated energetically.

The cases with nits in the head, were dealt with, in the first instance by circular letter to the Parents or Guardians, and were referred to the District Nurses.

I hope with the co-operation of the Parents and the help of the Authority to raise the standard of cleanliness amongst the school children.

The percentage of really dirty children is, very small, but it should be a negligible quantity in this county.

CLOTHING AND FOOTGEAR.

Records were made in 1015 cases and were returned as

		Boys.	Girls.	Total.
Good	...	471	455	926
Fair	...	31	28	59
Bad	...	17	13	30

Clothing was found to be very defective in 12 cases specially examined.

NUTRITION.

The number of children whose nutrition was found

		Boys.	Girls.
Good or Normal	...	646	608
Below Normal	...	25	20
Specially examined and found to be suffering from defective nutrition		22	27

The percentage of children whose nutrition was found to be below normal is 3.4.

The attention of Parents is called to this condition and advice given.

DENTAL CONDITIONS.

The standards adopted were :—

Good—when the mouth contained no more than two carious teeth.

Bad—when the mouth contained more than 2 and 5 or less carious teeth.

Very Bad—when the mouth contained more than five carious teeth.

Number of children examined at routine ages whose teeth were found

	Boys.	Girls.	Total.	%
Good ...	376	354	730	56
Bad ...	123	135	258	20
Very Bad ...	150	157	307	24

There were 59 boys and 79 girls specially examined for dental conditions and in all of these the condition was very bad, and requests were made to the Parents to have dental treatment as the mouths were in a septic condition and were affecting the general health of the children.

The above figures do not, in all probability, reveal anything like the true extent of dental disease among our school children.

At no time in our history was the importance of sound teeth so urgent as the present time, and it is a difficult task to impress upon Parents and others the value of the proper care of the teeth.

The number of children in the Elementary Schools of Merioneth who *systematically* clean their teeth is very few.

ENLARGED TONSILS AND ADENOIDS.

	Boys.	Girls.	Total.	
Number of children examined at routine ages ...	671	636	1307	
Number found to be suffering from enlarged Tonsils and Adenoids ...	165	151	316	24%
Number of special cases examined and re-examined found to be suffering ...	209	220		

(These latter figures include the cases seen in previous inspections).

In July 1917, the Authority decided to institute a scheme of treatment of this condition and resolved to establish treatment Clinics in various parts of the County.

Dr. E. Malcolm Stockdale of Rodney Street, Liverpool, a Surgeon on the staff of the Eye and Ear Hospital, Liverpool, was appointed the Operating Surgeon for cases of Tonsils and Adenoids, and also to examine such cases of apparent defective vision as were referred to him by the School Medical Officer, and, where necessary to prescribe glasses.

The Medical Officers of Health for the Sanitary District in which the Treatment Clinic is held were appointed Assistant Medical Officers and Anæsthetists at the School Clinics.

The Board of Education approved of the scheme.

Great difficulty was experienced in getting together the necessary equipment of these Clinics owing to the war, and the cost was greater than the estimate owing to the continual advance in prices, and it was not until January 1918 that everything was obtained.

Though not strictly in the work of the year under review it would not be out of place to briefly refer to the work already done, because, if it were not for the war the whole treatment scheme would have been completed in the calendar year.

It was decided to have two Clinics, one at Festiniog at the Oakley Hospital, and the other at Dolgelley utilizing the same premises as the Infant Welfare Centre.

At Festiniog the work was started February 13th, 1918, and six clinics of two days each were held. 68 cases of Tonsils and Adenoids were operated upon and 105 cases of apparent defective vision were examined. One case of ear discharge was seen by Dr. Stockdale in consultation with the School Medical Officer.

At Dolgelley three clinics of two days were held. 38 cases of Tonsils and Adenoids were operated upon and 38 cases of apparent defective vision examined, and three cases of ear disease seen by Dr. Stockdale in consultation with the School Medical Officer.

The work of the Treatment Clinics has been very successful, and during the current School Medical Inspection, most of the cases operated upon have been re-examined and the improvement is marked. The children are much brighter, have lost their previous listlessness and apathy, and both parents and teachers say that the children in every way have markedly improved.

The seeming want of interest in the welfare of the children shown by Parents is a little discouraging. Over 150 letters offering treatment were sent out from the Office, to which no reply was received.

Great care was taken to select cases for operation, and the offer of treatment was sent only to those cases in which the enlargement was permanent and tended to affect the child's physical well being, and the diagnosis was confirmed in every case at the operation.

EYE DISEASES AND ERRORS OF REFRACTION.

	Boys.	Girls.
Number found on Inspection of routine ages with apparent defective vision ...	89	111
Number found with defective vision—special cases	105	133
Blepharitis	44	33
Corneal Ulcers	0	1
Iritis	1	0

DEFECTIVE VISION.

At the Clinics at Festiniog and Dolgelley 143 cases of vision found to be defective by ordinary examination with Snellen's test types were brought up for examination by Dr. Stockdale.

Of these:—

Number found to be defective and glasses ordered ...	100
,, wearing correct glasses ...	7
,, wearing glasses which needed correction ...	13
,, found only requiring adjustment of frames ...	2
,, in which glasses were not advised owing to permanent defect ...	3
,, found not to have defective vision when examined under Atropine ...	17
,, found impossible to examine ...	1

The glasses are obtained by the Local Education Authority under a contract, and are sold to the parents at cost price. If parents are too poor to pay, the glasses are supplied free of cost.

The prescriptions are numbered and filed carefully at the County Offices.

Arrangements have been made so that the cases which have been marked by Dr. Stockdale for re-examination shall be brought to him at a future Clinic.

The following incident deserves to be recorded. One girl of 11 exclaimed when her glasses were fitted for her for the first time in school. "Oh! I can see the black-board quite plainly." An eloquent testimony of the need and efficiency of the treatment of defects.

The Authority can be congratulated on the first instalment of its treatment work, that it has been effective and satisfactory and the results of the treatment so far as can be seen, justify the appointments and the expense.

VACCINATION.

Of the 1307 children inspected at Routine Ages the number of the Vaccination marks were recorded in 1273 cases. 656 boys and 617 girls.

	Boys.	Girls.	Total.
Number with 5 Vaccination marks ...	6	2	8
,, 4 ,, ,, ...	309	301	610
,, 3 ,, ,, ...	86	81	167
,, 2 ,, ,, ...	123	115	238
,, 1 ,, ,, ...	26	30	56
,, 0 ,, ,, ...	106	90	196

15% of the children examined are not protected against small pox by Vaccination.

DISEASES OF THE HEART AND CIRCULATION.

10 cases of Heart Disease were found among the routine cases, and in 7 cases specially brought for examination.

These are invariably referred to their Medical Attendant for supervision, and advice as to physical exercise is given to the Head Teacher.

CHOREA AND NERVOUS DISEASES.

Number of cases of Chorea found ...	5
,, ,, of Epilepsy ...	2

INFECTIOUS DISEASES.

One case of Measles was discovered in School in the ordinary routine examination with a well marked rash. It was, of course, immediately excluded.

SKIN DISEASES.

The following skin diseases were found

		Boys.	Girls.
Eczema	...	4	8
Scabies	...	5	2
Psoriasis	...	1	0
Ringworm	...	3	2
Impetigo	...	23	22

With reference to the latter 35 cases were found in one School.

Energetic measures were taken to treat these cases, and with very satisfactory results.

This pustular form of skin disease can very well become a scourge in schools as it is very contagious. It was conveyed in this manner in the School in question.

Head Teachers should notify parents to obtain medical advice when they see cases of skin disease with pustular eruption, and should also notify the School Medical Officer.

RICKETS.

9 cases of Rickets were noted among the routine cases.

DEFORMITIES.

Cleft Palate	...	5
Harelip	...	1
Infant Paralysis	...	4
Hip Disease (arrested)	...	1
Spinal Curvature (arrested)	...	1
Talipes	...	1

TUBERCULOSIS.

15 cases were observed with very doubtful signs in the lungs, and in all 38 cases were referred to the Tuberculosis Physicians of the Welsh National Memorial Association for examination and re-examination.

I am glad to say that the most cordial co-operation exists between the Tuberculosis Officers and the School Medical Officer.

13 cases of Tuberculosis were diagnosed among Elementary School children during the year 1917.

5 boys ... 2 Pulmonary and 3 Non-Pulmonary
8 girls ... 5 Pulmonary and 3 Non-Pulmonary

Treatment.

6 children received treatment in Tuberculosis Hospitals — 4 boys and 2 girls.

6 children received treatment in Tuberculosis Sanatoria — 5 girls and 1 boy.

SCHOOL ATTENDANCE.

It would make for better school attendance if the Local Education Authority were to take into consideration and frame regulations for the closer co-ordination of the School Attendance Department and the School Medical Service.

In the report of 1913, the Chief Medical Officer of the Board of Education states that "the closer this co-ordination the more efficient and satisfactory becomes the work undertaken by each."

The Attendance Officer can assist the School Medical Service

1.—By notifying all cases of non-notifiable infectious disease which he meets with.

2.—By notifying all cases of children absent from School on Medical grounds.

3.—By notifying cases of children who are alleged permanently unfit to attend School.

The School Medical Officer can assist the School Attendance Officer by supplying lists of all children excluded on Medical grounds.

I would particularly emphasise that all Medical Certificates given in the cases of non-attendance be sent to the School Medical Officer.

The Head Teachers can also render great assistance in the problem of efficient School Attendance.

In the Report of the Medical Officer of the Board of Education for 1916, the following appears with reference to this question :—

"The question is one which, from several points of view, may advisedly receive the attention of Local Education Authorities at the present time when the problem how to economise in time, staff and expenditure, without the sacrifice of efficiency, is of national importance.....The work of the School Medical Service has emphasised the fact that *the problem of School Attendance, is in the main, a Medical problem.* This was not originally the case, but the efficient working of the School Attendance Department, in association with other factors, has in large measure eliminated those causes of absence from school which formerly operated, and there can be no doubt that the proportion of absences due to medical or alleged medical causes has steadily increased, as the average percentage of school attendance has increased....."